

Whitstable & Seasalter Endowed Church of England (Aided) Junior School



Religious Education Policy

LET YOUR LIGHT *Shine*
Matthew 5:14-16

Love ★ Joy ★ Goodness ★ Resilience ★ Trust

Reviewer	S Gilbert
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Headteacher Signature	<i>EM Taylor</i>

Matthew 5:14-16

'You are like light for the whole world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead, he puts it on the lampstand, where it gives light for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.'

Our Values

Love ★ Joy ★ Goodness ★ Resilience ★ Trust

At The Endowed, we are a school family, living and learning with a thirst for knowledge, we delight in everyone's achievements sharing joy and laughter along the way. Within the love of God, we nurture aspirations, celebrate each other's individuality enabling all to flourish. We let our lights shine in school, our community and the World beyond.

'You are light of the world' – *This aspirational perspective reminds children that the world is their oyster, and they are each capable of changing the whole world by the choices and actions they take. Each of our children is an Agent of Change – making the World we live in a better place for everyone.*

Such an approach is offered here at the Endowed, through a whole school commitment to generous hospitality, by being true to the Christian Values which underpin our school's ethos, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom and personal choice of each child.

Our aim is that Religious Education teaching and learning will help to educate our pupils for knowledge, for dignity, for tolerance and for respect, encouraging them to live well together with their peers, family and the wider world community. This view aligns with the Religious Education Statement of Entitlement published in February 2019

'A city built on a hill cannot be hidden' – *through RE learning, we aim for the children to value all God's children, and believe in celebrating each person in their unique identity, demonstrating how each individual can flourish and be treated with dignity and respect, with all our precious diversity. Understanding that each of them has something to offer the world and their interests, talents and beliefs are celebrated and shared.*

Introduction

At The Endowed, pupils and their families can expect a high-quality religious education (RE) curriculum which is varied, rich and challenging, enabling all learners to acquire knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and other world views.

***Let your light shine before others** – We want the children to not be afraid to shine their light and tell their story in front of others, including those with power and influence. To know that their perspective is valid and important, and to be ready to voice that with courage. As Agents of Change the children will be supported to exercise courageous advocacy, and our staff and leaders' will model that by listening carefully to all the children and to accept the challenge to keep learning and growing through RE. We want them to use resilience to keep their lights shining even when it is difficult to do so and Trust in God to help them do this.*

As a church of England (aided) junior school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our curriculum. We use 'Understanding Christianity' as our main resource which follows an enquiry approach which includes theological concepts, philosophy and the pupils' own developing understanding of the world as part of their religious literacy. The Kent Agreed Syllabus delivers learning about other religions, including world views and non-faith belief systems and aims to foster respect, tolerance and understanding to help your children take their place in the modern world.

Thus, our RE curriculum intrinsically links with our school's Christian values of: Love, Joy, Goodness, Resilience and trust, alongside the school's wider vision. It supports the pupil's spiritual, moral and culturally (SMSC) development and is intended to make a significant impact on learners through providing a wider range of learning opportunities for the pupils to make links between beliefs, practices and values systems of the faiths and world views studied.

***'... so that [others] may see your good works'** – We encourage the children to live out their faith or non-faith in practical ways and through our values. We want them to understand that loving action is an essential part of living God's way. It is as important to walk the walk as it is to talk the talk, and they may be inspired to change for the better when they learn through RE and see how others are living out their hope for peaceful and just world. We want our children to share their good news stories with the world beyond our school and in this way share our Christian Values too.*

Aims:

Through varied pedagogical opportunities pupils will explore meaning and purpose in their own lives, values and identity and increase their tolerance and understanding of others. Re teaching aims to provoke challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of

life, beliefs about God, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human in the 21st century.

Religious Education at the Endowed seeks to enable pupils to learn *about* religions and to learn *from* them:

- To gain knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of major world religions and other world views including non-faith value systems.
- To appreciate the diversity of religious belief and practice, as well as non-religious views worldwide and the rights of others to hold beliefs different from their own.
- To help pupils to respond to what they learn so as to inform, clarify, and develop their own beliefs and values.
- To understand the continuing influence of religious beliefs, values, and traditions on individuals, communities and cultures.

Objectives:

- To know about and understanding Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical texts
- To gain knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of a range of religions and world views appreciating diversity, continuity, and change within the religious or world views being studied.
- To help pupils to develop the ability to make their own reasoned and informed judgements about the religious and moral issues which arise from thinking about human experience and a study of religious belief and practice.
- To help pupils to recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different places, times and cultures.
- To help the pupils consider ways in which religions, spirituality and philosophical ways of living and thinking might have importance for their own lives.
- To encourage questioning, reflection and philosophical thinking.

The Curriculum

At the Endowed RE is considered a core subject and thus has a high profile in our school curriculum and it is the responsibility of senior leaders to ensure that RE teaching and learning is comparable to other subjects in both intent, implementation and impact.

This means RE is:

- Is intrinsically linked to our distinctive Christian ethos enabling all pupils to flourish.
- Contributes to British Values and to the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner without bias to engage and challenge all pupils through an exploration of core concepts and questions.
- Lessons will provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews
- Reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy.
- Enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including its unique and diverse denominations.
- Engages pupils directly with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- Provides opportunities for the pupils to explore texts, belief, practices and identifies of a range of religions and world views.
- Supports the development of other curricula areas such as literacy, critical thinking, empathy and the ability to express thought, feelings and personal belief.
- Encompasses, supports and facilitates the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies and pedagogical approaches appropriate to the pupil's needs.
- Offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all the pupils, whilst extending and deepening understanding for the most able whilst providing support for those pupils who may need it.
- Ensures the contributions of all pupils feel valued and their views acknowledged and respected

Balance and Time Allocation.

At the Endowed we adhere to requirements of the Church of England RE Statement of Entitlement to provide timetabled high-quality sequential religious education that is available to all pupils. Christianity is the main religion taught and accounts for at least 50% of RE curriculum time. RE is timetabled weekly and has a high profile at the Endowed. Please refer the curriculum overviews which can be found on our website.

Principles of Teaching and Learning

At the Endowed, teaching and learning is through recognised pedagogical approaches and quality first teaching methods to provide fully for the needs of all pupils. RE lessons provide a 'safe space' which allows pupils to develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, evaluation and reflection and encourages them to explore their own ways of seeing, living belonging and believing. It provides opportunities for the pupils to engage in informed, meaningful and impactful dialogue with religion and world views

Pupils will experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry -based style of learning.

Opportunities for Learning

Religious education will be made relevant to pupils in at least two ways. Firstly, teachers will establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the pupil's own lives. Secondly, teaching will enable pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice. This will be done through engaging pupils in an enquiry-based style of learning and through posing challenging questions to and by the pupils. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on these BIG questions.

Pupils will experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through, for example:

- Listening to the teacher and each other
- Reading and analysing religious and sacred texts
- Seeking information in libraries and on computers through personal research.
- Listening to and engaging with the teacher and with their peers
- Discussion and debate
- Posing challenging questions
- Engaging in individual, paired and group work
- Interpreting information from different sources
- Using a range of media, including artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama
- Visitors and external visits – e.g., Canterbury Cathedral.
- Time for reflection and self-analysis.
- Discovering more about their own spirituality through the analogy of the Window, Mirror and Door.

Teaching and learning at the Endowed aims to challenge stereotype, misinformation and misconceptions about culture, race, gender and religious views. Learning seeks to present religious and world views in all their richness, beauty and diversity in a sensitive, respectful and accurate way to encourage a positive attitude. All views, opinions and questions and challenges will be treated with sensitivity and respect. Teachers will aim to establish clear links between elements of religious belief and practice and aspects of the pupil's own lives. Its aim, to enable the pupils to gain something of personal value and insight from their learning.

Cross- Curricular Links.

RE supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, critical thinking, empathy and the ability to express personal feelings and thoughts. It encourages creativity linking with foundational subjects such as art and drama. It provides a global, historical and cultural view linking with the humanities. RE is also offers a major contribution to the pupil's SMSC development, emotional literacy and citizenship.

Health and Safety

Health and safety concerns may arise within RE lessons and teachers and pupils will follow appropriate school policies when:

- Handling artefacts
- Consuming food
- With external visitors
- On external trips

Cross-curricular Skills and Links

RE has links with English, Computing, Music, Drama, history, Geography and PSHE. It also makes a major contribution to pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and education for citizenship. (SMSC).

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise at some times in religious education, for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts
- Consume food
- Visit places of worship

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in Religious Education will:

- Be directly related to the objectives in 'Understanding Christianity' scheme
- For other religious and non-faith assessment will be based on the Kent Agreed Syllabus
- Seek to identify development in the different ways of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge
- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop
- Employ well-defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort – following schools marking policy.
- Will include pupil self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding as well as whole school areas for development.
- Use the same terminology as used in the other Core Subjects e.g. English

Management and Administration

Religious Education will be managed by the R.E. subject leader with the support of senior leaders and Canterbury Diocese.

Role of the Subject leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of Religious Education
- Ensure RE provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure it remains up to date
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work to ensure all teachers are aware of what should be taught in Religious Education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected.
- Monitor and review the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupils' progress and standards.
- Ensure there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE.
- Monitor, analyse and question RE assessments carried out by staff.
- Liaise with the Diocesan Education Officer, HT and Governors to feedback on monitoring and the impact of RE across the school and to ensure that the syllabus continues to fit with the denominational nature of the school.
- Support colleagues and develop their subject expertise by sharing new ideas, pedagogy, continuing professional development and in-house support
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff.
- Oversee the RE budget and monitor RE resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.

Resources

Religious education will be funded to enable a full range of resources on different religions to be purchased, such as books for teachers, pupils and the library; posters, CDs, DVDs and artefacts and provide access to appropriate weblinks including podcasts. The school makes uses of the guidance material produced by the Diocese. Funding will also allow where possible visits to different places of worship and provide INSET for staff. All resources will be stored and be easily accessible and kept in good condition. Resource banks will be available for both staff and pupils on all major religions and world views as appropriate.

Legal Requirements

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request. (*DfE Circular 1/94, paragraphs 44 and 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2012 p28*)

Parents' rights to withdraw pupils from religious education

From the time of the 1944 Education Act, parents have had the right to withdraw their pupils from Religious Education. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for wanting to do so. The school will provide an alternative if a child is withdrawn from R.E. or use suitable material supplied by the child's parent or carer. The school reserves the right to review these resources and to liaise with the Diocese to ensure they are KS2 appropriate and fit within the school's SMSC responsibilities.

However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we would hope that all children admitted will fully participate in RE, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the headteacher before making this decision.

Teacher's rights not to teach religious education

The 1944 Education Act, also states teachers in schools have had the right not to teach religious education and any refusal to do so must not be used to discriminate against them.

At the Endowed however, because we are a Church of England (Aided) School it is expected that all staff will contribute to the school's Christian Ethos and teach and lead RE.